

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
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PORTLAND DISTRICT
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**OREGON SBA ANNOUNCES THE 2009
SBA SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR:
TARA O'KEEFFE-BROADBENT, PRESIDENT OF O'KEEFFE'S COMPANY**

Portland, Ore. – SBA Oregon District Director Harry DeWolf announces that Tara O'Keeffe-Broadbent, President and Founder of O'Keeffe's Company of Sisters, Oregon is the Portland SBA Small Business Person of the Year for the state of Oregon. O'Keeffe's Company, a woman-owned family business, based in Sisters, Oregon, was founded in 1994. Her company manufactures three skin treatments: Working Hands, Healthy Feet, and Life Out There. Awards will also be given to small business champions and an excellence and innovation award will be given to the leading small business development center. The awards will be presented at the SBA Portland's Small Business Week Awards Gala May 28, 2009, 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Portland, Oregon.



"During these challenging times the SBA wants to recognize and celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit and successes of our small businesses. Their contribution to Oregon's economy can not be overstated. Small businesses continue to create more new job opportunities and new products to make all of our lives better. I am proud to honor our top Oregon entrepreneurs and the true champions of small business whose tireless efforts provide tangible and significant results to the entire state of Oregon and SW Washington," said SBA District Director Harry DeWolf.

O'Keeffe grew up on the family ranch in southern Oregon. She began college at Willamette University, majoring in music. After discovering a love of chemistry, she transferred to Oregon State University to attend the Oregon State University School of Pharmacy, graduating in 1978. O'Keeffe's first job following graduation was as a hospital pharmacist at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, Oregon. She also worked as a retail pharmacist throughout Central Oregon. O'Keeffe's father, a life long rancher, challenged her to find a solution to the severe splits and cracks on his hands and feet. What started as a quest to find relief for her father became such an effective formulation, that it launched a business—what is known today as O'Keeffe's Company. O'Keeffe's Company, a woman-owned family business, based in Sisters, Oregon, was founded in 1994. O'Keeffe's company now manufactures three unique products: Working Hands, Healthy Feet, and Life Out There. O'Keeffe spends much of her free time working on volunteer projects at home and abroad, sharing her skills and experience locally, around the state, and as far away as Guatemala. She lives with her husband in Sisters. She has three children, all currently attending college in medical fields. Supporting her family and community remain the most important aspects in O'Keeffe's life.

2009 Small Business Champions & Awardees:

2009 Small Business Development Center Service Excellence and Innovation Center Award

-- Mary Merrill, Director of Community College Columbia Gorge SBDC

Minority Small Business Champion of the Year for the NW Region and Oregon

-- Lydia Muniz, Governor's Advocate for Minority, Women and Emerging Small Businesses State of Oregon

Women in Business Champion of the Year for the NW Region and Oregon

-- Diane McClelland, President, Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder of ASTRA Women's Business Alliance

Small Business Journalist of the Year for Oregon

-- Rodger Nichols, The Dalles Chronicle

SBA Financial Services Champion of the Year for Oregon

-- Tom Knox of People's Bank of Commerce in Medford, Oregon

SBA Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year for Oregon

-- Randy Montalbano, Contract Specialist US Army Corp of Engineers Portland District

For more information see www.sba.gov or www.sba.gov/or

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